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WEDNESDAY
MARCH 3, 1954

I sent off a telegram on my conversation with Pinay. I did not, however, in view of his having told me emphatically that he did not want certain remarks repeated, include many of his observations.

Laniel and Pinay have no good blood for each other. Pinay considers Laniel an honorable man but one without vision, with his thought entirely concentrated on maintaining himself in office for as long a period as possible. It is for this reason, Pinay believes, that he did not bring the EDC Treaty to a vote last autumn, as he presumably had promised the American Government, when, Pinay thinks, he would have had no difficulty in passing it. He strung everyone along because of his ambitions for the presidency of France by making promises first to one party and then to another which finally became so conflicting that an outright position by him in trying to force the EDC to a vote would have been a source not only of political but of personal embarrassment to him.

Under these circumstances, Pinay sees no hope of Laniel making the determination to bring the affair before the Chamber in advance of the Easter recess of Parliament unless he is forced to do so by the pressure (1) of French public opinion, (2) of foreign admonitions, or (3) of threats against the continuance of his Government by supporters of it. There is no chance of (1). As regards (2), in view of what I have told him, he thinks we have gone as far as we can. As to (3), efforts are presently being made to force him to swallow this unpleasant pill. Pinay thinks that, in the absence of Socialist support, not enough votes can be attracted from the Right, by any concessions open to the Government which would not vitiate the Treaty, to obtain a majority in favor of it. Therefore, the Socialist support must be secured. Laniel, according to him, is playing the dangerous game of neglecting the steps necessary to obtain a great majority of Socialist votes in an unfruitful coquetry with the adversaries of the Treaty.

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Pinay believes Bidault's position is dictated by sincere motives but that Bidault cannot carry the day if Laniel continues to waver as at present, unless the MRP threatened to bring the Cabinet down by withdrawing from it. All in all, Pinay's conception of the present state of affairs is discouraging, but, as he is careful to add, it is colored by a complete lack of belief in knowledge of Laniel's political courage and/his limited appreciation of the long-range interests of France in international affairs.

I had lunch at Bill Tyler's. Elim O'Shaughnessy is here on a short trip from Moscow, and Maurice Nègre, head of Agence France Presse, which more or less corresponds to our Associated Press, was the other guest. We had quite an argument with Maurice, whom I know well and who has always been an opponent of the EDC. Like many of his countrymen, and in spite of his own frequent visits to the United States, he seems to have no real conception of the depth of skepticism and mistrust of the intentions of the French Government to bring this issue to a vote.

André de Staercke came to see me at six o'clock and we talked of the possible desirability of reviving the suggestion made by de Staercke to Churchill that the U.K. should undertake to raise a division or brigade of volunteers and incorporate it in the European Army. Winthrop Aldrich had called me earlier in the day to ask whether there was anything he could do to be helpful in connection with U.K. EDC association. After my conversation with de Staercke, I sent Winthrop a telegram as follows:

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"Sent: AMEMBASSY LONDON. 720.

"EYES ONLY AMBASSADOR ALDRICH.

"Reference our telephone conversation today as to whether anything more of helpful nature regarding EDC can be done in U.K., suggest following for your consideration.

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"Please refer to COLED 157 to show importance of time situation.

"If this idea has any merit it must be acted upon very shortly. The suggestion is entirely on my own responsibility. It has never so far as I am aware been discussed in Washington except that I made reference to it privately to Dulles in connection with a conversation I had with Van Zeeland some weeks ago, who generally had the same objective in mind. I believe also that Pug Ismay may have discussed it when it was sketched out to him by a member of the NATO Council. In addition there is reason to believe Sir Winston at one time toyed with the idea.

"Hope you might be inclined approach Foreign Minister on a purely personal basis and ask whether there is a possibility of the British Government, in connection with the U.K.-EDC Association agreement, offering to recruit a division or even brigade of British volunteers to be incorporated in the European Army in the event that the EDC Treaty is ratified.

"Such a conditional offer would have, it is believed, an electrifying influence in France and might well be decisive in effecting the ratification of the EDC Treaty. BRUCE."

Tomorrow de Staercke will ask Ismay to write on the same subject to the Prime Minister.

Jacqueline Patenôtre, usually so optimistic and a great supporter of EDC, is said to have become [redacted] discouraged over its prospects. I went to see her tonight and told her it was my personal opinion the conditions insisted upon by the French Parliament could be met. The real obstacle to a debate remains the inability of the French Cabinet to make a definite decision. I do not know whether I succeeded in elevating her spirits but she has been working like a Trojan for many months to bring the wavereers into the fold.

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There was considerable excitement at the office this evening when Alphand almost hysterically telephoned to say that Harold Callender had published an article in today's New York Times which would almost certainly result in the defeat of EDC. They had had it transmitted by wire from New York. I got a copy of it from Callender late tonight. Although it is severe, it seems to me to be an excellent piece of factual reporting on the situation existing in France. The article is as follows:

"PARIS, March 2. The United States has told French officials it would make a declaration of policy on keeping its troops in Europe whenever the French Cabinet fixed a date for a parliamentary vote on the European army treaty -- but not before.

"The French Government had asked for an agreement that United States and British troops should remain in Europe as 'counterweights' to the West German forces to be created under the treaty and as guarantees of German fidelity to the treaty.

"The French wanted this agreement, or at least some formal statement to the same effect, before fixing a timetable for a parliamentary showdown on the treaty. But Washington has indicated there would be no such United States statement until the French Government made up its mind whether and when the showdown would come.

"There are growing doubts here and in Washington that the French Cabinet intends to make good the promise of Premier Joseph Laniel, who announced in November that he would bring the treaty to a vote soon after the Berlin conference of foreign ministers, which ended Feb. 18.

"Some officials calculate that if the treaty is not voted on this month, it may be deferred until the end of the Geneva conference on the Far East, which is scheduled to begin April 26. This might put off the French decision on the treaty until the autumn.

"Meanwhile the United States Congress would have voted the foreign aid bill for the coming fiscal year without knowing whether there would be a European Defense Community to receive aid.

"It is thought possible that in these circumstances even the military supplies now in the 'pipeline' might be cut off without waiting for that line to become empty as a result of the Richards Amendment, withholding aid to the nations involved if the European army project failed.

"In spite of the air of patience of Dr. Konrad Adenauer, some observers believe that another long French delay on [illegible] could lead the West

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German Chancellor to propose a separate application of the Bonn peace contract with the Western Allies and the termination of the Occupation Statute without awaiting the European army treaty and that such a proposal would be sympathetically received in Washington and London.

"The French not only wanted a formal United States statement on its troops before fixing the date of parliamentary action on the treaty. They also wanted the United States statement to be made outside the context of the North Atlantic Treaty.

"Washington is understood to have rejected the second as well as the first. It is believed the long-considered declaration will be based exclusively upon United States obligations to the North Atlantic Treaty Organization and the strategic plans developed by it, which so far have entailed a United States contribution of land forces in Europe.

"The declaration is expected to go as far as the executive authority can go in assuring the continued presence of these forces but without a commitment for any specific period of time.

"But the United States Government is understood to have made clear its unwillingness to contribute to further delays of the treaty by entering upon new diplomatic discussions. The Washington declaration, when and if it comes, will have to be accepted by the French Government as Washington's last word, which will not be subject to further negotiation with the French Cabinet.

"The French Cabinet will be expected to submit the declaration with the treaty to the National Assembly, which, of course, will be free to accept or reject it, in the light of the guarantees the Assembly sought two years ago.

"Washington officials do not want any more arguments with French Governments about what the Assembly might or might not accept. Washington wants the Assembly to make a decision on the European army treaty and believes this can be done quickly if the French Cabinet so decides.

"When Georges Bidault, French Foreign Minister, met John Foster Dulles, United States Secretary of State, in Berlin during the recent conference, he was emphatic in asserting his desire to get the treaty ratified without delay. He is understood to favor bringing it to a vote before the Assembly's Easter recess April 15.

"But there have been no signs of any vigorous efforts toward this end. Premier Laniel appears not yet to have made up his mind and his Cabinet is divided.

"It has been remarked here that the Assembly's Foreign Affairs Committee has heard at length opponents of the treaty but no important witnesses in its favor such as the Government might provide if it were determined to press for a decision.

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"Some observers have suggested that the Government appeared to leave it to Daniel Mayer, chairman of the committee and bitter opponent of the treaty, to bring the treaty to a vote.

"Another sign of the Government's hesitation to act is found in the absence of any haste to settle the Saar question, a pre-condition to the treaty's ratification, although Dr. Adenauer is reported to be ready to discuss it with M. Bidault within the next few days.

"Another requirement for ratification, so far as the Socialists are concerned, is some assurance of a European assembly to provide democratic control of a European army.

"This assurance would have to come from the foreign ministers of the six nations concerned, France, West Germany, Italy, Belgium, the Netherlands and Luxembourg.

"A committee representing these nations has been at work here on a draft for a political community. But in this committee there is said to have been no sign of the slightest disposition on the part of the present French Government to assist in creating such a community -- toward which M. Bidault is frankly very cool.

"The belief appears to be growing in Washington that all the French conditions for ratification could be fulfilled fairly rapidly if the French Government so desired. Like the Washington declaration, the agreement by the British is said to await only a decision of the French Cabinet to go ahead. Even an accord on the Saar is regarded as feasible in a short time if French officials really tried for it.

"The failure of the French Government to press forward with the treaty is attributed to the fact that it is divided and might fall on the treaty issue, which M. Laniel wants to avoid.

"Some officials of other nations also suspect that the French Government holds off in the hope of winning new concessions from Washington and London. Hence the United States message ruling out further bargaining about United States troop commitments."

An additional stir has been created by a similar article sent on March 2 by Preston Grover, head of the Associated Press, in these terms:

"The French Cabinet headed steadily toward a showdown over whether to push the European Army plan to a quick vote or shuffle along in the hopes things will be better after Easter.

"The conflict evidently pitted a considerable part of the pro-European Army Cabinet members against Premier Joseph Laniel. The Premier is reportedly insisting on a slower pace and a different course in bringing the issue to a vote than is favored by his Foreign Minister, Georges Bidault, and several other Ministers.

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"American and German officials have indicated they thought an early debate and vote not only would be more likely to bring ratification of the Army Pact (EDC) but would also get the issue out of the way before the Big Four meet in Geneva with China and other nations April 26 to discuss ending the Korean and Indo-Chinese wars. The Americans especially are emphasizing this latter point. The Germans have less direct interest in Asian affairs.

"To help speed things along, West German Chancellor Conrad Adenauer has agreed to meet Bidault at once to get the troublesome Saar issue out of the way before the Chancellor leaves March 8 for a visit to Greece.

"Bidault, who asked for an early conference on the Saar, had not, late today, indicated whether he could meet on such short notice because of Indo-China problems on his hands. If he doesn't, Adenauer will be away until late in the month, thus postponing elimination of this serious stumbling block in the way of ratification.

"Aside from the Saar question, three other conditions to ratification have been put forward by various factions and their handling has precipitated one of the hottest Cabinet discussions since Laniel took office eight months ago at the end of a five weeks crisis.

"The three conditions are: the nature of British association with the six-nation European Army under which Germans will be rearmed; American Presidential assurance to convince France that the United States will not draw its troops out of Europe before times are more stable; and finally, action on a European Political Authority eventually to govern not only the European Army but such agencies as the Coal-Steel pool.

"Reports in Paris were that the British were ready to agree to an association with EDC, short of full membership, which some supporters of the plan said here would be satisfactory. This is one of the conditions needed to get a vital chunk of Socialist votes for the EDC ratification.

"As to the American guaranty, Premier Laniel has told Americans that he wants to see the exact nature of it before he agrees even to bring the Treaty to a vote. This has come nearly outraging a number of American officials here. They feel he not only was committed to bring the Treaty to an early vote but that the United States, on its part, has gone plenty far already in easing the way fc French ratification of the EDC.

"Finally, Laniel contends that any steps toward creating a European Political Authority, while it may win Socialist votes, may alienate some of the ex- De Gaullists he hopes to win over. Already a considerable body of them are counted in his Assembly majority and now he argues that as many as 40 of them can be persuaded to vote for EDC if there is no supra-national authority. He has told his critics that to push the Political Authority too far would squash his chances of getting the ex-De Gaullist vote for EDC and might even cause the former de Gaullists to desert his Government and bring a collapse.

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"On the other hand, Socialist leader Guy Mollet has promised 80 Socialist votes for the EDC provided some real progress is quickly made on the European Political Authority, so dear to all European Socialists.

"Back of it all is a critical time factor.

"The EDC is still lodged in committee and must be acted on both by the Foreign Affairs and Defense Committees of the Assembly. Supporters say that, with Cabinet insistence, the Committee work could be completed before the end of the month. Then there would be two weeks for debate and voting before the Assembly recesses, with almost religious fervor, for the Easter recess in mid-April.

"Opponents of the Treaty for the most part are trying to postpone the vote until after Easter, knowing that then it might well be postponed until after the Geneva Conference, which might continue into June. Then would come the recess and EDC would be dead until late fall and possibly forever.

"By then, the mounting impatience in Congress would have expressed itself in cuts or restraints on military aid of which the French are aware, but so divided that action to avert it is almost beyond them."

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